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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/551,230	09/27/2005	Shoji Kawahito	053124	4306

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EXAMINER

YOUNG, BRIAN K

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2819

DATE MAILED: 08/09/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/551,230

Applicant(s)

KAWAHITO, SHOJI

Examiner

Brian Young

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 September 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-9 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 4 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2,3 and 5-9 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 27 September 2005 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Detailed Action

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

2. Claims 1 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Fujita et al.

Fujita et al disclose (fig.1) a two stage A/D converter including an N-bit A/D Conversion means (producing D11-D4 bits) arranged in an array (ADC's 20) and an amplifier (30) for amplifying analog residual which is a difference between an input signal and an N-bit A/D conversion result, and, an M-bit A/D conversion means (40, producing D3-D0 bits) for performing A/D conversion on the analog residual, characterized that a first stage is performed on the input signal by the N-bit A/D conversion means, and an A/D conversion in a second stage is performed on the amplified analog residual by the M-bit A/D conversion means, so as perform N + M bit A/D conversion.

Fujita et al recite (see abstract):

"An integrator 10 inputs and integrates a current signal output from a photodiode PD, and outputs a voltage value A1. A first A-D converter 20 converts the voltage value A1 into a 8-bit first digital value (D11 to D4), outputs a first digital value, and outputs a voltage value A2 in response to a difference between a voltage value corresponding to the first digital value and the value A1 to an amplifier 30. The amplifier 30 amplifies a difference between the analog value corresponding to the first digital value (D11 to D4) and the first analog value A1, and outputs the amplified difference to a second A-D converter 40. The amplifier 40 inputs a voltage value A3 outputted from the amplifier 30, converts the value A3 into a 4-bit second digital value (D3 to D0) and outputs the digital value."

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It is further noted Fujita et al recite that the circuit is used in an image sensor (see the title).

3. Claims 2,3 and 5-9 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Panicacci disclose an image sensor using an ADC wherein the conversion results can be read out in varying orders.

Kozlowski et al disclose an imaging sensor system using a pipeline ADC.

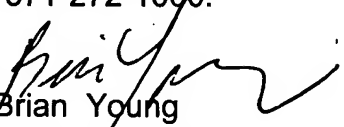
Barna et al disclose an image sensor using gain blocks and ADCs.

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Brian Young whose telephone number is 571-272-1816. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 7:30-4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rexford Barnie can be reached on 571-272-7492. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Brian Young
Primary Examiner
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